

SECRET-SECURITY INFORMATIONTHE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
JOINT SUBSIDIARY PLANS DIVISION**JCS Declassification/Release Instructions on
File**SPDM-377-52
4 September 1952

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MEMORANDUM FOR [REDACTED] DIRECTOR,
PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD:

Subject: PSB D-21.

Reference: SPDM-331-52, 6 August 1952.

1. I refer to paragraph 4 of your memorandum of 29 July (forwarding the subject paper to the Board), in which you bring up the question of panel concern with such matters as: scope of Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) responsibilities, problems of jurisdiction, PSB's mission, competence of the Board to approve certain recommendations, etc. You invite informal comments on these points. Since these same matters occasionally plague us in the military, either as panel members, or when asked to comment on a draft PSB paper, I have given some thought to them. I offer the following comments for your consideration.

2. While I am entirely in sympathy with your aim--to free the panels of annoying, and seemingly petty, jurisdictional questions so that they may concentrate their energies and special abilities on productive thought--the fact remains that unless these questions are correctly settled, the substantive work of the panels may be rendered fruitless. The mechanism of implementation, however dull, is an unavoidable part of every problem. And it seems to me that if there are valid reasons for freeing the panels of this chore, these reasons must be all the weightier as regards the Board itself. I believe that the Board members should not be expected to devote their time to the unraveling of jurisdictional difficulties. Rather, when a paper is submitted to them for approval, they should feel assured that it is complete and correct in all details, including the method of implementation. They should not be asked to approve, for example, a recommendation which places a requirement on the Mutual Security Agency, unless the Board does, in fact, have the authority to issue a mandatory directive to the Mutual Security Agency.

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3. In order that both the Board and panel members may be freed of these problems, it might be well to have, as a chairman of each panel, a PSB staff officer who is perfectly familiar with the extent of the PSB's mission and authority. This officer could see to it that recommendations were so worded as to avoid any jurisdictional disagreements. (See suggestions in paragraph 2 e and paragraph 4 of SPDM-331-52 referred.) - page 2 of 4 of TAB B.

4. I believe that the Board has the authority to formulate national psychological strategy in support of approved national policies. It has the authority to promulgate overall national psychological objectives, policies, and programs as guidance to departments and agencies. I do not believe that the Board has the authority under the Directive of 4 April 1951 to direct specific actions by departments and agencies. On the other hand, I do believe that it is the responsibility of the departments and agencies to take implementing action designed to achieve the psychological strategy objectives promulgated by PSB. I also believe that the Board has the authority to ascertain that the implementing plans do in fact satisfy the strategic requirements.

5. In the development of national psychological strategy I believe PSB panels will inevitably conceive specific actions, many of which may have merit. I believe it is appropriate that an appended list of these actions be included with the PSB strategy for the information of the operating departments and agencies, without force of directives.

6. It is probable that a few specific actions may be so essential to obtaining the objectives that failure to implement them would vitiate the strategy. Under these circumstances the Board could obtain authoritative concurrence from the operating agencies prior to the promulgation of the psychological strategic guidance, thus assuring prompt and effective implementation.

7. I suggest that you reconsider paragraph 3 of PSB D-4 in the light of the fourth paragraph of the President's directive. It seems to some of us that the interpretation of paragraph 3 of PSB D-4 has had an unfortunate influence on the content, make-up, and emphasis of those PSB plans so far produced.

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8. In any case, whether this concept of the Board's authority is correct or not, panels should be thoroughly informed, and should not recommend to the Board any action which it, as the PSB, cannot properly take. If there is any doubt as to the Board's authority, I believe it to be in the national interest to face this problem squarely and resolve it.

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Copies to:

General Walter Bedell Smith
Director of Central Intelligence
The Honorable William C. Foster
Deputy Secretary of Defense
The Honorable Davis K. Bruce
Under Secretary of State

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